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An electronic newsletter from the Nova Scotia Provincial Library

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Questions or comments about the activities in this issue should be directed to the contact people named. Comments on or suggestions for THE DISSEMINATOR should be directed to Sue Dirani . To add a name to the mailing list, send a message to Michael Gillis.

IN THIS ISSUE:

FEATURE ARTICLES:

- Public Attitude Survey
- Standard Reporting Forms
- WCRL Automation
- Staffing Notes

RESOURCES:

- LINKed
- Professional Reading

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PUBLIC ATTITUDE SURVEY

The NS Provincial Government will be carrying out a public survey on services provided by regional public libraries in Nova Scotia. The goal of the survey is to gather information that will support the development of policies on public libraries in the province. The survey will provide new and unique feedback from the public on their priorities for public library service, and will help determine basic levels of library service. The process will include a telephone survey and possibly focus groups.

A steering group has been established and is made up of representatives from the Council of Regional Librarians, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, the Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia, and the Department of Education and Culture. With a completion date of May 6, the RFP for the survey has been issued and the steering group will meet soon to evaluate the proposals and select the consultant. The steering group will meet later to review the survey questionnaire, and to discuss the findings of the consultant. The survey results should be completed early in May.

STANDARD REPORTING FORMS

Both the 1995 Regional Library Funding Review Committee and the recent full scope audit of the Provincial Library and regional libraries recommended a standard financial reporting format for regional public libraries. The audit also recommended more accountability on the part of the regional libraries in terms of development of annual goals and objectives and reporting of results achieved.

As a result, the Provincial Library, with assistance from the Grants and Audit Division of the Department of Education and Culture, have developed a package of standard reporting forms for regional library finances, statistics, goals and objectives, results achieved and output measures. These forms have recently been sent out to regional libraries and will be implemented for the 1996-97 fiscal year. They should provide more consistent and comparable data regarding regional library financial and service activities, which can more readily be combined into a more meaningful annual report.

WESTERN COUNTIES REGIONAL LIBRARY AUTOMATION

The second phase of automating all regional public libraries in Nova Scotia commenced last month with a three day meeting between Western Counties Regional Library staff members Trudy Amirault and Virginia Stoddard, Provincial Library staff, and representatives from the DRA/MultiLIS library software vendors, John Richardson and Dianne Brunelle. The WCRL system, consisting of the headquarters in Yarmouth and its ten branch libraries, will be the first system to be automated outside of metro Halifax.

The meetings, which took place at the Provincial Library in Halifax from January 29-31, also included a demonstration of new tools which DRA/MultiLIS has been developing - DRA Kids, DRA Find, and DRA Web. The Provincial Library will be implementing DRA Find, the Z39.50 client, later this year. This will enable users to search multiple databases simultaneously using one software interface. With the use of the Internet increasing almost exponentially in public libraries throughout Nova Scotia, it is

encouraging to see the simple GUI-based user interface, which is becoming so familiar to the public on the Internet, incorporated into state-of-the-art searching tools.

The remaining two days were spent on intensive planning and discussion of the parameters of automating Western Counties Regional Library as a separate databank on NcompasS. In the future, this will enable users to have a choice of either searching the Western Counties catalogue specifically or including it in a search of a group of regional library catalogues throughout Nova Scotia.

STAFFING NOTES

Laurinda Matheson has resigned her position as Library Assistant in Technical Services. Laurinda has been on maternity leave and has decided not to return to work at the present time. She will be missed by her coworkers and we wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors!

Michel Ogilvie has accepted the position of French Services Librarian and will begin March 4 working out of Western Counties Regional Library. Michel comes to us from Montreal, where he is an MLIS graduate of McGill University. He is fluently bilingual and has excellent computer skills. Previously he worked as Information Specialist with the Forum Economique de Verdun.

Heather Halliday has accepted the position of User Services Librarian in the Eastern Counties Regional Library effective March 1, 1996. She will be replacing Eric Stackhouse who has recently accepted a position as Systems Librarian with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library. Ms. Halliday is originally from Ontario but has lived and worked in the Montreal area for many years. She holds a Masters of Library and Information Studies degree from McGill (1987) as well as a B.A. in Modern Languages (1974) from that same institution. She will be starting an orientation period at Eastern Counties on February 15 and she can be reached via e-mail at hhallida@nsme.library.ns.ca.

At the newly amalgamated Halifax Regional Library, Aileen Lewis and Susan McLean have been appointed to the positions of Acting Assistant Director, Administrative Services and Acting Assistant Director, Public Services respectively. Ms. Lewis held the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Dartmouth Regional Library from 1978 to 1996. Ms. MacLean was most recently in the position of Acting Chief Librarian of the Halifax City Regional Library.

LINKed

Here are more WWW sites to inform and entertain you. If you know of any interesting sites to include, e-mail me (sdirani@nshpl.library.ns.ca) and I'll list them here.

Well-known Canadians
http://physics.bu.edu/~terning/Canadians.html
- an entertaining list of famous people in the entertainment industry, science, sport, etc. who are Canadian. You'll be surprised at just who IS a Canuck!

College and University Home Pages
http://www.mit.edu:8001/people/cdemello/univ.html
- this is a very comprehensive list of universities and colleges worldwide that have a presence on the Web. Organized by country and then alphabetically.

CanWorkNet
http://canworknet.ingenia.com/canworknet/english/
- this site provides some help if you're looking for employment in Canada. Information includes Canada Employment Centre job listings.

Electronic Frontier Canada
http://insight.mcmaster.ca/org/efc/
- this is the Canadian arm of the Electronic Frontier Foundation in the U.S. Their site provides information on the organization as well as on the dangers of, and legality of, Internet censorship.

The Globe and Mail
http://www.globeandmail.ca/
- don't expect the full-text of the daily paper, but this is an interesting way to access some of the Globe's columns. Beware - heavy with graphics!

PROFESSIONAL READING

This month's column focuses on customer service and conducting productive meetings. All items found in this column can be borrowed from the Provincial Library's Professional Collection through regular ILL channels.

1) Dewey, Barbara I. - Team Power : Making Library Meetings Work. Chicago: American Library Association, 1993. (Call # - Prof. 025 .1 Dew)

- The central theme of this book is that library professionals need to communicate efficiently and creatively with ever increasing sophistication. The author suggests that meetings represent the context within which a great deal of organizational communication occurs and her goal is to provide a framework and to suggest ways to improve meetings as a central component of organizational effectiveness.

2) Walters, Suzanne - Customer Service : How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians. New York : Neal-Schuman Pub., 1994 (Call # Prof. 025.5 Wal)

- The author of this manual states that the benefits of providing good customer service include satisfied customers who return again and again. She even suggests that these same library patrons will likely

contribute private dollars and volunteer their own services to support libraries. This book deals with the many issues involved in achieving quality customer service such as staff training, good market research, effective problem solving and complaint management. -- Frank Oram

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